car; so he repacked the luncheon basket and left them.

Vendetta won by three lengths.

Medenham had secured twenty-five to one, and the bookmaker who paid him added the genial advice, "Put that little lot where the flies can't get at it." The man could afford to be affable, seeing that the bet was the only one in his book against the horse's name. The King's horse and Grimalkin were the public favorites; but both were hopelessly shut in at Tattenham Corner, and neither showed in the front rank at any stage of a fast run race. When Medenham climbed the hill again, hot and uncomfortable in his leather clothing, Mrs. Devar actually welcomed him with an expansive smile.

"What odds did you get me?" she cried, as soon as he was within earshot.

"A hundred and twenty-five pounds to five, madam," he said.

"Oh, what luck! You must keep the odd five pounds, Fitzroy."

"No, thank you. I hedged on Vendetta; so I am still winning."

"But really, I insist!"

He handed her a bundle of notes. "You will find a hundred and thirty pounds there," he said, and she understood that his refusal to accept her money was final. She was intensely surprised that he had given her so much more than she expected, and the first unworthy thought was succeeded by a second, How dared this impudent chauffeur decline her bounty? Cynthia pouted at him. "Your Tomkinson is a fraud," she said.

"Your Grimalkin was well named," said he.

"That remark is very cutting, I suppose, Fitzroy."

"Oh, no. I merely meant to convey that a cat is not a racehorse."

"Poor fellow!" mused Cynthia. "He is vexed because he lost. I must make it up to him somehow; but he is such an extraordinary person I hardly dare suggest such a thing." She began to adjust her veil and dust coat. "If you are ready, Mrs. Devar," she said, "I think we ought to hit the pike for Brighton."

Mrs. Devar laughed. Fitzroy evidently understood, as he had taken his seat and the engine was humming. "Americanisms are most fascinating," she vowed. "I wish you would use more of them, Cynthia. I love them."

Cynthia was slightly ruffled, though if pressed for a reason she could hardly have given one. "Slang is useful occasionally; but I am trying to cure myself of the habit," she said tartly.

"A picturesque phrase is always pardonable. Oh, is this quite safe?"

THE Mercury, finding an opening, had shot down the hill with a smooth celerity that alarmed the older woman. Cynthia leaned back composedly.

"Fitzroy means to reach the road before the police stop the traffic for the next race," she said. Then, after a pause, she added, "I wish we could keep this car for the rest of our tour; yet I suppose I ought not to interfere in the arrangement father made with Simmonds."

Mrs. Devar frowned. Her momentary tremor had fled, and she had every cause to regard with uneasiness the threatened substitution during the forthcoming ten days, of this quite impossible Fitzroy for that very chauffeur like person, Simmonds. Her acquaintance with Peter Vanrenen and his daughter was sufficiently intimate to warn her that Cynthia's least desire was granted by her indulgent parent; in fact, Cynthia would have been hopelessly spoilt if it had not been for a combination of those happy chances which seem to conspire at times in the creation of the American girl at her best. She was devoted to her father, her nature was bright and cheerful, and she had a heart that bubbled over with kindliness. Mrs. Devar chose the right line of attack. She resolved to appeal to the girl's sympathies.

"I am afraid it would be a rather cruel thing to deprive Simmonds of his engagement," she said softly. "He has bought a car, I understand, on the strength of the contract with Mr. Vanrenen—"

"That doesn't cut any ice—I mean there would be no ill effect for Simmonds," explained Cynthia hurriedly. "Father will meet us in London at the end of our run, and Simmonds could come to us then."

The steel-gray eyes narrowed. Their owner was compelled to decide quickly. As opposition was useless, she laughed, with the careless ease of one who was in no way concerned. "Don't you think," she said, "that if your father sees this car Simmonds will be dispensed with somehow?"

Cynthia nodded. The argument was unanswerable.

They were crossing the course at a walking pace. At that point a sort of passage was kept clear by the police for the convenience of those occupants of the stands who wished to visit the paddock. The owner of Vendetta, having been congratulated by royalty, was taking some friends to admire the horse during the rubbing down process, when his glance suddenly fell on Medenham. Though amazed, he was not rendered speechless.

"Well, I'm—" he began.

But the Mercury possessed a singularly loud and clear motor horn, and the voice of the Hon. Charles was drowned. Still, his gestures were eloquent. Quite obviously he was saying to a man whose arm he caught, "Did you ever in your life see anybody more like George than that chauffeur? Why, damme, it is Medenham!"

So Mrs. Devar lost a golden opportunity. She knew Fenton by sight, and her shrewd wits must have set her on the right track had she witnessed his bewilderment. Being a pretentious person, however, and not able to afford the upkeep of a motor, she was enjoying the surprise of two well dressed women who recognized her. Then the car leaped forward again, and she scored a dearly won triumph.

At this crisis Medenham's scrutiny of the road map provided by Simmonds for the tour was well repaid. He turned sharply to the right past the back of the stands, and was fortunate in finding enough clear road to render pursuit by his elderly cousin a vain thing, even if it was thought of. The Mercury had to cross the caravan zone carefully; but once Tattenham Corner was reached the way lay open to Reigate.

To be continued next Sunday

Two in a Tree

Continued from page 7

fect. But a diamond is my birthstone." Then I felt like an ass. A man usually finds out those things first. "I'll have it changed," I said.

"Oh, no," protested Sally. "Really, I shall love this emerald."

It was getting late; so pretty soon I took Sally into the house. I dreaded the family congratulations; but fortunately the family were all out, all but Sally's little brother, and as he was abed hours before he didn't count.

As I crossed the street I met Pete coming out of Nell's house. "Hello, Bill," he said. "Am I to congratulate you?"

"Yes," I said shortly. Somehow I fairly hated Pete that moment. To think of Nell's marrying him almost set me wild. And yet I suppose, after the outburst of that afternoon, he felt the same way about me and Sally.

So I said goodnight and went into the house, to lie awake, tossing half the night, and dreaming the other half that Nell and Pete were sweeping up the aisle of the church with the organ playing the wedding march, and all sorts of fool things like that.

FINALLY I fell asleep and awakened only toward nine o'clock when Mandy brought up a tray with my toast and coffee and a tiny little note from Sally in her queer, straggling handwriting. I read it eagerly.

"Meet me at nine o'clock down under the big willows by the river," it said.

It was quarter to nine by my watch. I gulped the coffee, rushed through my bath, and fairly ran through the field behind the house to try to get there on time. I didn't like to keep her waiting, even if I didn't love her. From now on, I reflected, I should have to shield her and protect and cherish her, this dear little girl who loved me and, after all, wasn't to blame for the cruel trick Fate had played upon us.

She wasn't there at all; but, sitting on the log where we had hatched our plot nearly a month before, sat Pete, whittling savagely on a willow switch and looking about as unhappy as I've ever seen him.

He turned as he heard my step. "You here?" he growled.

"Yes," I said. "The truth is, I was to meet Sally here at nine o'clock; but she isn't here yet."

"That so?" remarked Pete. "Well, I have a rendezvous, too, with my fiancée, who is late. Funny they should both have selected the same place."

I thought just then that I heard a faint giggle from the treetops. I looked up into the gloom of the willows—and high up, reached by a ladder and cleats nailed on the branches, there was a platform which we